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ABSTRACT

A three-dimensional model designed to depict the interrelationships among evaluation procedures, development systems, and reward structures as they affect professional personnel is offered as a research tool in this paper. The model is intended to aid in describing and understanding the productivity of professional personnel and to enhance the development of procedures related to accountability. Key terms in the field of professional personnel evaluation are defined, assumptions underlying the model are listed, and the model is described and illustrated in the paper. (Author/PGD)

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EVALUATING PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL IN ORGANIZATIONS: A GLOBAL VIEW

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Professional personnel in organizations have long been the object of study (Barnard; Colodarci & Getzels; Hemphill et al.). A preliminary review of the literature finds no efforts aimed at describing and reconciling three major areas bearing directly on recently heightened efforts to increase productivity in all areas of organized human endeavor: the evaluation procedures, development systems, and reward structures for professional personnel in organizations (Fearing, 1980). This paper sketches briefly the progress made in conceptualizing a model designed to depict these interrelationships and thus serve as a source of understanding and guide to action for educational researchers and practitioners, and other scholars concerned with faculty evaluation. Key terms are defined, and basic conditions and assumptions listed for the model. The model is then sketched in, and explained, ending in a brief polemic. Validation of the model awaits review, acceptance and usage by researchers and practitioners.

Some Key Definitions

The following terms appear crucial to the conceptual model and are defined accordingly:

1. Presented at the Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Dallas, 1981. Adapted from a paper presented at EN/ERS Joint Meeting, Austin, 1981.

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Evaluation procedures: both formal and informal methods of appraising the value or strength of some object: person(s), material, or program, in relation to some standard(s) so that a rational, responsible and timely decision can be made about the object; for example, whether to continue, modify or terminate a program.

Development systems: both formal and informal activities perceived by professional personnel as enhancing their growth through intensification or slackening of pace and opportunities through a particular allocation of people, material, time or goals.

Reward structures: incentives, tangible or intangible, which each person seeks as a goal whether knowingly or unknowingly. Reward structures vary from person to person, within a person from time to time, and have both stable and unstable elements.

Professional personnel: those persons who through preparation and intended effort plan,implement or evaluate the technical or operational activities of an organization; for example, executives, administrators, faculty, doctors, lawyers, researchers and engineers employed in organizations. Professional personnel generally control entry to their field, "police" their own kind, and accredit their own preparatory programs.

Organizations: an identifiable unit or group of persons with mutually agreed upon or understood goals, whether proprietary or non-profit, seeking to meet both the needs of the individuals within the group and the goals of the organization; for example, a hospital, university, engineering firm, or manufacturing company.

Crucial Assumptions

These assumptions are explicated as essential to understanding the model.

In exploring the relationships between evaluation procedures, development systems, and reward structures, it is assumed these elements are effective to the degree they are congruent, integrated, mutually reinforcing, and continuous.

Evaluation procedures are assumed to rest on the following assumptions:

- Self-appraisal is the highest form of evaluation
- Evaluation is a normal part of human development
- All evaluation in organizations includes both explicit and tacit knowledge (Polonyi)
- Social and technical factors intercede when evaluation occurs (Pirsig, Witkin)
- At best evaluation is based upon only a representative sample of a small portion of human behavior.

Development systems and their inherent activities are undergirded by these assumptions adapted from Miller.

- Everyone can improve their professional performance
- Growth activities should be individualized
- Opportunities for growth should be varied and diverse
- Improving competence should be the focus of the system.

Reward structures rest definitionally on these assumptions:

- What is rewarding for one person may or may not be rewarding for another
- What is rewarding for one person may not be rewarding at a later time
- Some kinds of rewards hold more stable over time than other kinds
- Certain combinations of rewards produce additive effects while others do not.

Essential Conditions

These conditions appear to be crucial to understanding the model:

- Professional personnel have significant input into decisions which affect them
- Professional personnel are a large part of the decision making process when these decisions affect them
- Professional personnel are perceived by themselves and others as crucial to the operation of the organization
- Professional personnel while seeking streamlined decision making procedures which affect them, perceive as a primary right their responsibility to seek respect for their authority in those matters for which they have primary responsibility.

The Model

The model, as presently conceived, may be represented as a cube having as its three dimensions evaluation procedures, development systems and reward structures. Each dimension is composed of an array of elements. Each element has social and technical aspects.

(Include Figure 1, page 10 about here)

Evaluation procedures

More specifically, along the evaluation procedures dimension are such elements as: state-of-the-art techniques (A); policy statements, guidelines, standards and expectations of the organization (B); actual practices of evaluation in the organization (C); degree of congruence of C to A (D); degree of congruence of C to B (E); perceptions of "real" load of a professional by the organization, evaluator or decision maker (G); degree of congruence of F to G (H); perceptions of "ideal" load of a professional by self (I); perceptions of "ideal" load of a professional by the organization, evaluator or decision maker (J); degree of congruence of I to J (K); and degree of preparation and expertise of the evaluator, evaluatee or decision maker.

This listing of elements does not exhaust the possibilities, but as with the other dimensions, is intended to be illustrative (Fearing, 1974).

Social and technical aspects characterize each of the elements listed. Using both Pirsig's and Witkin's interfacing

descriptions of the romanticist and the classicist (Pirsig, 72-75) and field-dependent and field-independent persons (Witkin) the elements take on the characteristics of the beholder. For example, the state-of-the-art techniques or "model" evaluation procedures (A) may be viewed and appreciated by a romanticist/field dependent or social person for their immediate appearance or wholistic image. The classicist/field-independent or technical type would perceive mainly the underlying form or parts. Technically oriented persons would tend to see such elements in elements B-K as being primarily social or caused by persons and feelings. These classical thinkers of field-independent inclinations would gravitate toward the technical aspects associated with elements such as: "Load" as measured conventionally; "Effect" produced by professional personnel; measurement characteristics of the task; error of measurement (random or constant); inherent variation due to uniqueness of the professional area of expertise; and inherent variation due to uniqueness of the particular setting.

Development systems

The elements along the development systems axis of the conceptual model parallel closely those for the evaluation procedures dimension: state-of-the-art techniques (1); policy statements, guidelines, standards and expectations of the organization (2); actual development activities available (3); degree of congruence of 3 to 1 (4); degree of congruence of

3 to 2 (5); perception of need for development by professional (6); perception of need for development of a professional by the organization, development personnel or decision maker (7); and other (8).

An element usually has components within it which require identification when the model is applied. For example, actual development activities available (3) may be offered by the organization, a neighboring educational institution and a self-study program of the Educational Testing Service.

Also, needs-response and productivity-efficiency may be viewed as opposite facets of each cell (Figure 2, page 10), constantly seeking balance in the operation of the organization. (Seguin et al. unpublished paper)

Reward structures

The third dimension of the model, reward structures, has two sets of elements: tangible incentives such as salary and salary benefits (a), facilities (b), support personnel (c), research services (d), information services (e), other (f); and intangible incentives such as a sense of community within peer groups (g), feeling that input to decision making about professional aspects of specific program makes a difference (h), and other (i).

Each cell within the model should be viewed as having both explicit and tacit forms of knowledge within it (Polonyi). Scientific and personal knowledge provide the information which makes the model operational.

Discussion

This conceptualization will be utilized in research which seeks to describe and understand the dynamics which govern the productivity of professional personnel in organizations. The particular area of study will be university faculty. The model needs to be tested with other professional personnel in other kinds of organizations.

Productivity of professional personnel is becoming a focal point of attention as productivity in general receives heightened attention in all fields of endeavor. While professional personnel are not the total picture they are a critical element in the picture. To better describe and understand the productivity of professional personnel through their evaluation, development and reward is the goal of this model. It is in this spirit that the model is offered to researchers and practitioners for their consideration, use, and testing.

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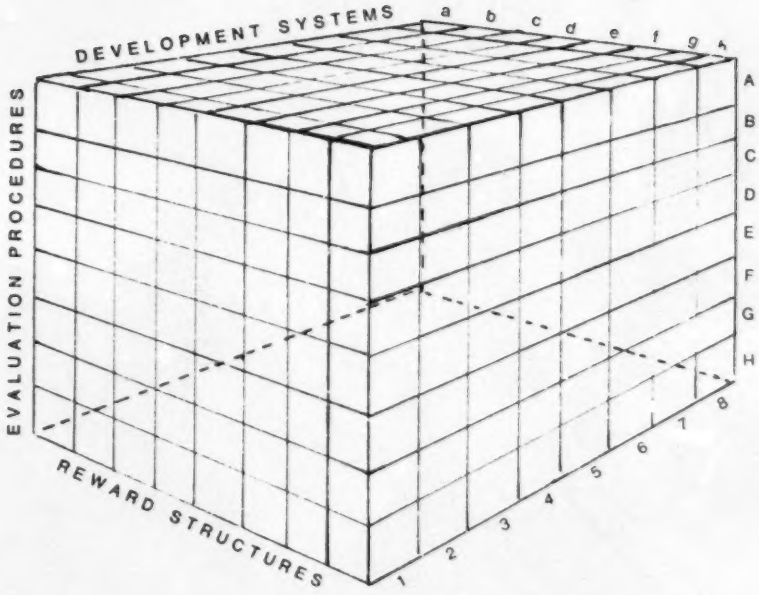
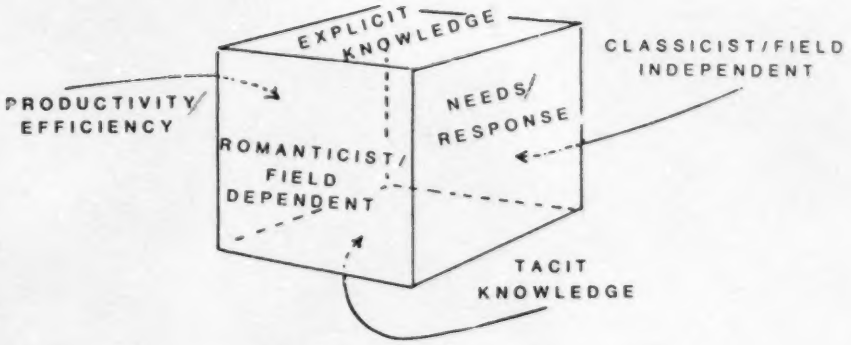
THE MODEL

(figure 1)





FACETS OF A CELL

(figure 2)